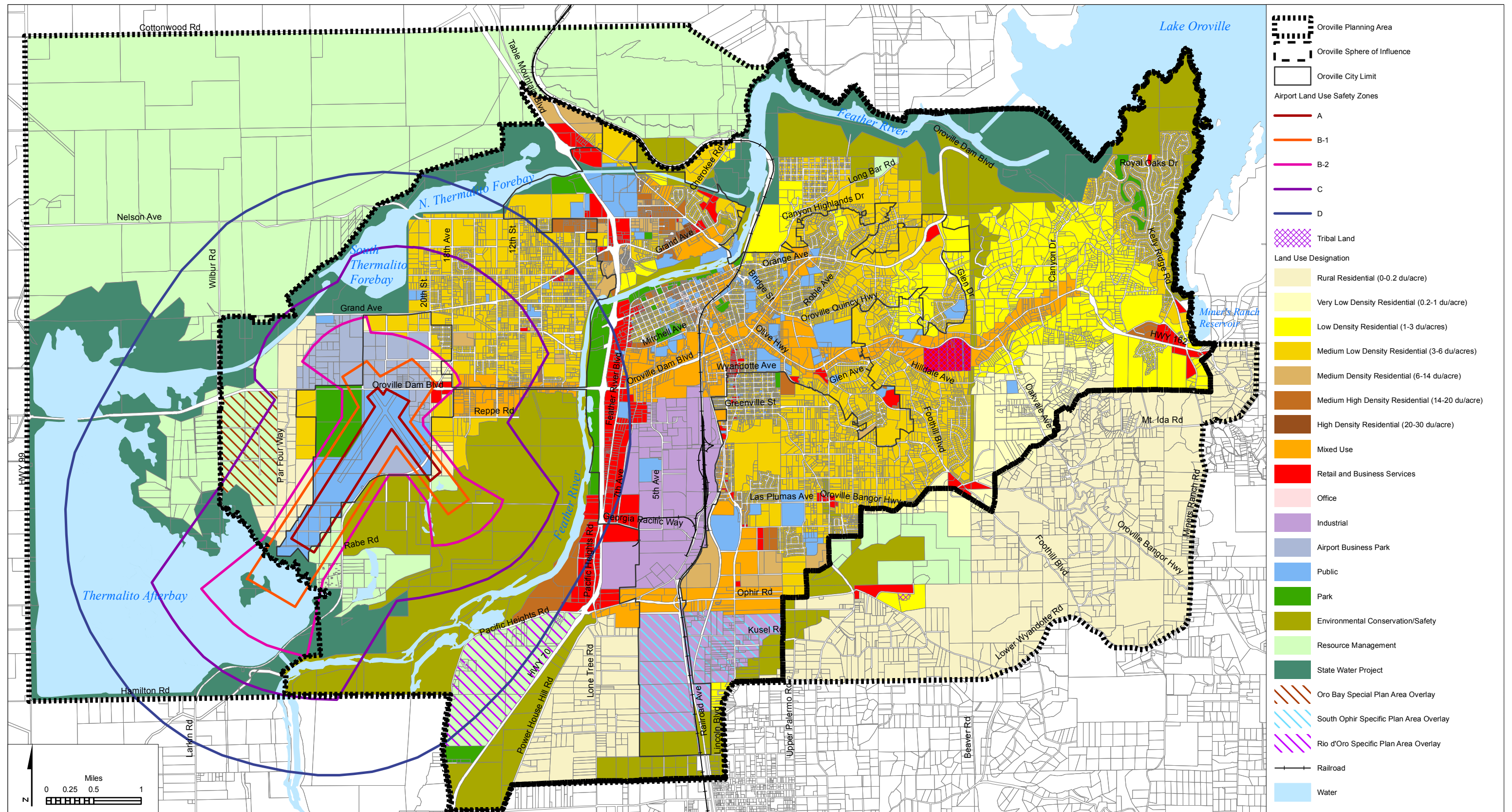


- **Medium High Density Residential.** This designation permits townhomes and apartments at densities of 14 to 20 dwelling units per net acre.
- **High Density Residential.** This designation permits townhouses, apartments, and condominiums at 20 to 30 units per net acre.
- **Mixed Use.** This designation permits a mix of residential, commercial, and offices uses at densities of 10 to 30 dwelling units per net acre and a maximum FAR of 0.4.
- **Retail and Business Services.** This designation permits business activities that offer goods and services to the community and allows for a maximum FAR of 0.4, except in the Historic Downtown where an FAR of 2 is allowed.
- **Office.** This designation permits business and professional uses to be developed with a maximum FAR of 0.4.
- **Industrial.** This designation permits general manufacturing at a maximum FAR of 0.4.
- **Airport Business Park.** This designation allows for light manufacturing, limited industrial, food processing, wholesale trade, and offices. Retail businesses and public services are permitted to a lesser extent and would generally be allowed as an accessory use. The allowed FAR ranges from 0.2 to 0.35.
- **Public Facilities and Services.** This designation permits schools, governmental offices, airports, and other facilities that have a unique public character.
- **State Water Project.** This designation refers to land areas of the State-owned Oroville-Thermalito Complex.
- **Unique Agriculture Overlay.** This designation allows agricultural support and specialty agriculture uses to protect and promote small-scale agriculture, regardless of whether such uses are allowed in the underlying designation. Such uses include wineries, road-side stands, farm-based tourism, and ancillary restaurants and/or stores.
- **Oro Bay Specific Plan Area.** The Oro Bay Specific Plan will determine the mix of uses that will occur on this 409-acre site. This Specific Plan will limit development to not more than 2,400 dwelling units of mixed residential types. Commercial areas for this Specific Plan are limited to 5 acres of Retail and Business Serving designation to be located along the Highway 162 frontage. The Specific Plan will specify a maximum permissible FAR of 0.4 for the proposed retail use.
- **Rio d'Oro Specific Plan Area.** The Rio d'Oro Specific Plan will determine the mix of uses that will occur on this 647-acre site. This Specific Plan will limit development to not more than 2,700 dwelling units of mixed residential types. Commercial areas for this specific plan are limited to 30 acres of Retail and Business Serving designation to be located along the northern portion of the Specific Plan area. The Specific Plan will specify a maximum permissible FAR of 0.4 for the proposed retail use.
- **South Ophir Specific Plan Area.** The South Ophir Specific Plan will determine the mix of uses that will occur on this 784-acre site. A primary goal of the Specific Plan will be to provide a mix of uses that includes a business/technology park complex for clean industry. The amount of development to be included in this area is not outlined in the Oroville General Plan.



Specific Plans

A specific plan is fundamentally a tool for the “systematic implementation” of a general plan, typically within a defined area. Because a general plan must address policy issues on a broad scale throughout an agency’s jurisdiction, it lacks the specificity needed to deal with a smaller area. Although a specific plan must be consistent with the general plan that governs its jurisdiction, it can address infrastructure, land use, and financial issues in a more appropriately focused and detailed manner.

Specific plans represent an opportunity for a local government to protect environmental resources and implement the relevant general plan for an identified area of the community. A specific plan contains the regulations, conditions, programs, and legislation necessary to implement each of the seven mandated elements of a general plan. It offers a unique opportunity to combine zoning regulations, capital improvement programs, detailed site development standards, and other regulatory schemes into one document tailored to the needs of a particular area.

North Chico Specific Plan

The North Chico Specific Plan was adopted by the Butte County Board of Supervisors in January 1995. The Specific Plan area encompasses 3,590 acres of unincorporated county land bounded by Sycamore Creek to the south, Highway 99 to the west, Rock Creek to the north, and the Chico Municipal Airport to the east. The Board of Supervisors initiated the preparation of the Specific Plan to comprehensively respond to development proposals and incorporate them into a concept of land use for the area, while evaluating and providing for area-wide solutions to drainage, circulation, and provision of public services. The majority of the Specific Plan is designated for residential uses, and particularly low density suburban homes. The Specific Plan is expected to generate approximately 2,800 new dwelling units, approximately 580 acres of open space and parks, 380 acres of industrial uses, 50 acres of commercial and office uses, and 65 acres of public/quasi-public uses. Although development impact fees have been adopted to help fund various improvements within the Specific Plan area, the funding mechanisms necessary to pay for all needed infrastructure have yet to be established.

Stringtown Mountain Specific Plan

The Stringtown Mountain Specific Plan was adopted by the Butte County Board of Supervisors in September 1994. The Specific Plan addresses design criteria and development standards for the future development of a health resort and residential community in the foothills east of Oroville, located at Highway 162 and Forbestown Road. The Specific Plan includes approximately 125 acres of residential uses, 13 acres for a resort, 3 acres of commercial uses, 28 acres of park and open space, and 1 acre for a fire station. The development foreseen in the Specific Plan has encountered obstacles to its implementation, primarily due to issues with provision of sewer service. The proponent is working to overcome these constraints and develop the project. County General Plan 2030 also calls for a significant expansion of this Specific Plan area to the northeast, as indicated through the Specific Plans to be Developed Overlay.

Northwest Chico Specific Plan

The Northwest Chico Specific Plan was adopted by the Chico City Council in December 2005. The Specific Plan area encompasses 700 acres bounded to the north and northwest by Mud and Sycamore Creeks, to the east by Hicks Lane, and to the south by Eaton Road. The Specific Plan

includes land within the city limits as well as land within unincorporated Butte County. The goals of the Specific Plan include creating new well-connected and multi-modal residential neighborhoods that include a mix of uses. In particular, the Plan includes 360 acres of single-family residential uses, 160 acres of multi-family residential uses, 24 acres of mixed uses, 65 acres of parks and open space, and 6 acres of public facilities and services.

10.1.2 Environmental Setting

Existing Land Use

This section provides an overview of the existing land use pattern within the Plan Area based on data provided by the Butte County Assessor's Office and BCAG in 2008. Table 10-1 shows the acreages of various existing land uses in the Plan Area, while Figure 10-10 illustrates existing land uses.

Table 10-1. Acreage of Existing Land Uses within the Plan Area

Land Use	Acres
Agriculture	392,030
Residential – Single-Family	61,950
Residential – Multi-Family	6,880
Commercial and Office	7,320
Industrial	2,500
Public/Quasi-Public	34,380
Tribal Lands	410
Vacant	41,140
Undefined	21,570

Source: Butte County Assessor's Office and Butte County Association of Governments unpublished data.

Agriculture

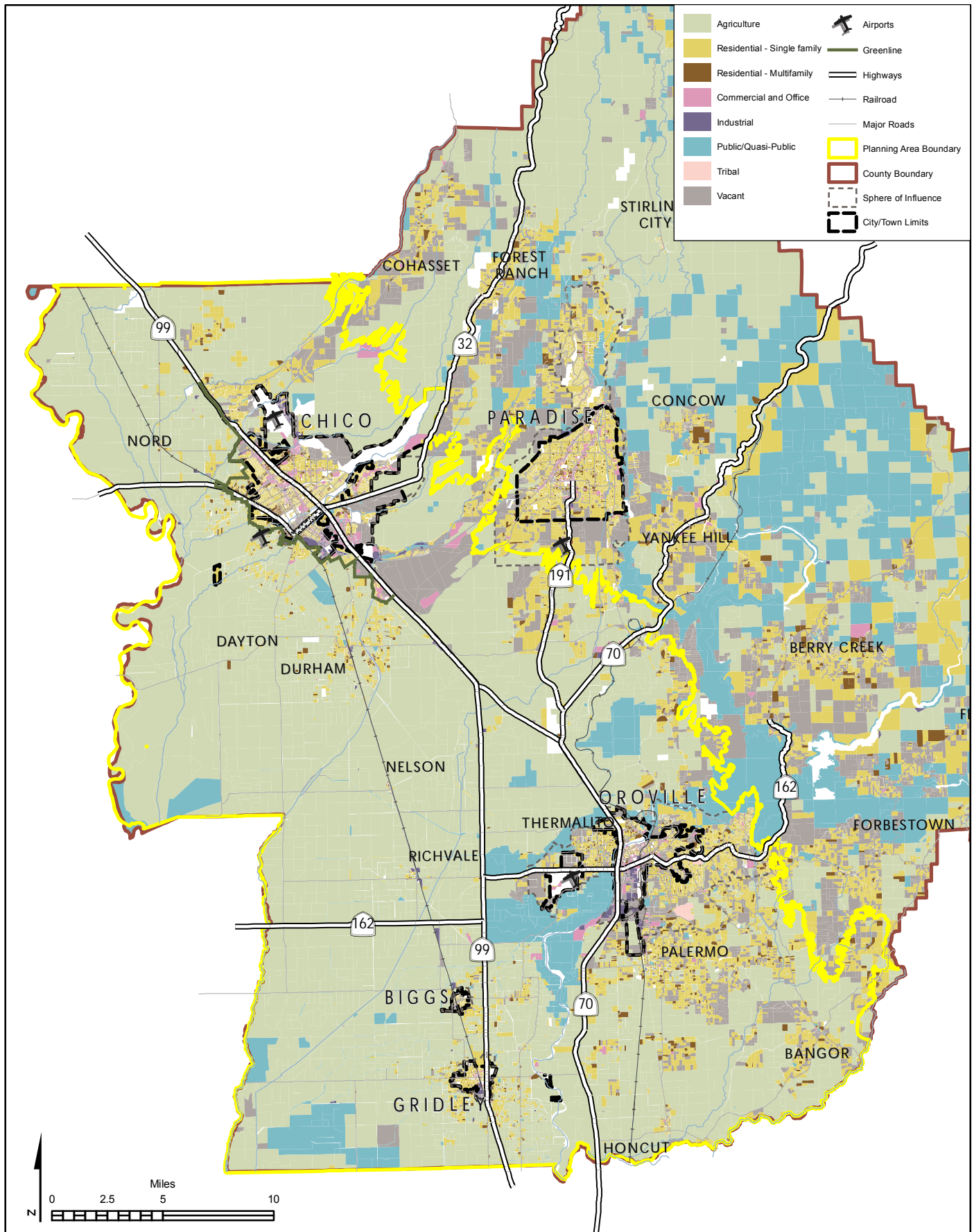
Agriculture is the dominant land use within the Plan Area, accounting for approximately 392,030 acres (69% of the Plan Area). Agricultural lands include field and row crops, orchards, rice, grazing, dry farming, and timber.

Single-Family Residential

Most households in the Plan Area are in single-family dwelling units. Single-family units are dispersed throughout the Plan Area on approximately 61,950 acres (11% of the Plan Area). This acreage includes large parcels that have only one house on them.

Multi-Family Residential

Multi-family residential development includes any housing type with more than one unit in a building, including duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, apartment buildings, and condominiums. There are approximately 6,880 acres (1% of the Plan Area) of multi-family residential uses interspersed throughout much of the same residential areas as the single-family units within the Plan Area.



Commercial and Office

Commercial uses include retail, office, service, and lodging uses. There are 7,320 acres of land (1% of the Plan Area) within the Plan Area in commercial use. Commercial and office uses are concentrated within the cities and in unincorporated communities.

Industrial

Existing industrial uses include light manufacturing, heavy industrial, service and repair, processing, and warehousing, as well as industrial uses related to timber, oil, and gas rights. There are approximately 2,500 acres (0.4% of the Plan Area) in industrial use within the Planning Area. Industrial uses are primarily located near the cities, along major transportation corridors, and in timber-producing regions.

Public/Quasi-Public

The Public/Quasi-Public category encompasses several types of uses, including parcels owned by federal, State, County, and municipal agencies; parcels owned by special districts; and parcels that accommodate civic and institutional uses such as churches, hospitals, and utilities. Public and quasi-public uses account for approximately 34,260 acres (6% of the Plan Area) within the Plan Area.

Tribal Lands

There are two tribal reserves in the Plan Area comprising approximately 410 acres in the Oroville area. Both reserves are anchored by casinos. Gold Country Casino occupies about 90 acres located off of Olive Highway and is operated by the Tyme Maidu of Berry-Creek Rancheria. The Feather Falls Casino and tribal reserve lands occupy over 300 acres off Ophir Road. The casino is operated by the Concow Maidu of Mooretown Rancheria.

Vacant Land

For the purposes of this EIS/EIR, vacant land is defined as privately-owned land that is designated for development or agricultural production but which currently has no structure or building improvement and is not used for active agricultural production. Vacant land is distributed throughout the Plan Area and comprises 41,140 acres (7% of the Plan Area). The average vacant parcel size is approximately 6 acres.

10.2 Environmental Consequences

This section incorporates by reference the impact determinations presented for land use planning and consistency in the Local Agencies' general plan EIRs (as described in more detail in Chapter 3, Section 3.3, *Resource Chapter Organization and NEPA/CEQA Requirements*).¹ The significance findings and mitigation measures of each of the general plan EIRs are compiled in Appendix C. The Lead Agencies have reviewed these analyses and found them to be appropriate for the purposes of this EIS/EIR.

¹ These previous CEQA documents are available collectively for public review at the BCAG offices (2580 Sierra Sunrise Terrace, Suite 100 Chico, CA 95928-8441). Individual general plans and EIRs are also available at each of the respective land use agencies.

10.2.1 Methods for Impact Analysis

The BRCP would not provide individual project approvals or entitlements for any private or public development or infrastructure projects. Accordingly, this EIS/EIR does not provide CEQA or NEPA coverage for individual covered activities and does not function as a *programmatic* or *umbrella* CEQA or NEPA document for regional development and infrastructure projects. The BRCP EIS/EIR evaluates only the adverse and beneficial environmental effects associated with the decisions of the Local Agencies, water and irrigation districts, and Caltrans to approve, permit, and implement the BRCP. Accordingly, the methods for analyzing direct impacts on land use planning and consistency are tailored to evaluate the decisions of the Local Agencies, water and irrigation districts, and Caltrans to approve, permit, and implement the BRCP. This EIS/EIR also incorporates the impact determinations of the Local Agencies' general plan EIRs to analyze indirect impacts on land use planning and consistency.

In adopting the EIRs for the local general plans, each Local Agency determined the programmatic impacts on land use planning and consistency would be at or mitigated to a less-than-significant level through the implementation of general plan policies and the adoption of identified mitigation measures. It is assumed that all covered activities approved by the Local Agencies would be consistent with the policies of their respective general plans and would be subject to any mitigation measures identified in the general plan EIRs, such that impacts would be adequately mitigated. Water and irrigation district activities have not been analyzed in previous CEQA documents. These activities include: rerouting of existing canals, replacement of water delivery structures, replacement of large weirs, mowing and trimming vegetation along service roads, and removing aquatic vegetation from canals. Potential impacts on land use planning and consistency could occur primarily during construction or maintenance of these activities.

10.2.2 Significance Criteria

In accordance with Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines, the action alternatives would be considered to have a significant effect if they would result in any of the conditions listed below.

- Physically divide an established community.
- Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to, a general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.
- Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan.

10.2.3 Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Alternative 1—No Action (No Plan Implementation)

As discussed in Chapter 2, Section 2.3.1, *Alternative 1—No Action (No Plan Implementation)*, under Alternative 1, project proponents would apply for permits on a project-by-project basis, without a coordinated and comprehensive effort to minimize and mitigate biological impacts through the BRCP. Under the Alternative 1, urban development and public infrastructure projects would continue to occur pursuant to the approved general plans of the Local Agencies and BCAG's regional plan(s). These include residential, commercial, and industrial development, as well as construction,

maintenance, and use of urban infrastructure, parks, recreational facilities, public services, and similar types of urban land uses. Other activities that would occur under Alternative 1 are construction and maintenance of public infrastructure projects outside of urban areas, including public infrastructure projects in and over streams (e.g. bridge replacements). No regional conservation strategy or conservation measures would be implemented; therefore, benefits to and impacts on land use and consistency associated with conservation strategy and conservation measures would not occur.

Impact LU-1: Physically divide an established community (NEPA: no impact; CEQA: no impact)

Under Alternative 1, the BRCP would neither be adopted nor implemented. Because development would occur as planned for and allowed under the Local Agency's general plans, land use impacts would be the same as those identified for the general plans. Therefore, in regard to the physical division of established communities, the determined land use impacts of the general plans for the Local Agencies are incorporated by reference. The environmental review performed for all of these plans found no significant land use impacts relating to the physical division of existing communities. Since this alternative would not change development activity already allowed by these general plans, there would be no new or additional activity that would serve to directly divide established communities. Although this EIS/EIR covers a longer planning horizon than the local general plans, it is anticipated that the nature of longer-term future development activity would not change, and would therefore also not divide established communities. Additionally, because Alternative 2 would not serve to prevent or alleviate community division, the failure to adopt and implement the BRCP under Alternative 1 would not result in greater division than would occur with adoption.

NEPA Determination: Alternative 1 would not change development activity identified within the Local Agencies' general plans. Therefore, there would be no impact. No mitigation is required.

CEQA Determination: Alternative 1 would not change development activity identified within the Local Agencies' general plans. There would be no impact. No mitigation is required.

Impact LU-2: Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to, a general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect (NEPA: no impact; CEQA: no impact)

As noted in the discussion for Impact LU-1 above, under Alternative 1, the BRCP would neither be adopted nor implemented, and the land use impacts resulting from implementation of the Local Agencies' general plans would remain because development would continue as allowed by these plans. Therefore, in regard to conflicts with land use plans, policies, and regulations, the determined land use impacts of the general plans for the Local Agencies are incorporated by reference. The environmental review performed for the Local Agencies' general plans found no significant impacts relating to conflicts with land use plans, policies, and regulations. Because this alternative would not change development activity already allowed by these or future general plans, there would be no new or additional activity that would serve to conflict with land use plans, policies, and regulations. Although no actual conflicts with applicable land use plans would occur, fragmentation of habitat and conservation and agricultural designated areas could be exacerbated by not adopting the BRCP under Alternative 1. This could result in incompatible land uses, such as agriculture adjacent to urban or urban adjacent to conservation areas.

NEPA Determination: Alternative 1 would not change development activity identified within the Local Agencies' general plans. There would be no impact. No mitigation is required.

CEQA Determination: Alternative 1 would not change development activity identified within the Local Agencies' general plans. There would be no impact. No mitigation is required.

Impact LU-3: Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan (NEPA: no impact; CEQA: no impact)

As noted in the discussion for Impact LU-1 above, under Alternative 1, the BRCP would be neither adopted nor implemented, and the land use impacts resulting from implementation of the Local Agencies' general plans would remain because development would continue as allowed by these plans. Therefore, in regard to conflicts with applicable HCPs or NCCPs, the determined land use impacts of the general plans for the Local Agencies are incorporated by reference. Environmental review for these general plans found no significant impacts in regard to this criterion.

Since adoption and implementation of the BRCP would not occur under Alternative 1, applicable conservation areas, practices, and policies would continue to be dictated by any existing or future HCPs or NCCPs in the area, as well as by other plans, policies, and regulations pertaining to species protection and habitat conservation. Therefore, Alternative 1 would not result in any new actions or policies that could conflict with any of the above.

NEPA Determination: Alternative 1 would not result in any new actions or policies that could conflict with land use plans, policies, and regulations. There would be no impact. No mitigation is required.

CEQA Determination: Alternative 1 would not result in any new actions or policies that could conflict with land use plans, policies, and regulations. There would be no impact. No mitigation is required.

Alternative 2—Proposed Action

Under Alternative 2, covered activities would include the existing, planned, and proposed land uses over which the Permit Applicants have land use authority; state and local transportation projects; maintenance of water delivery systems (e.g., WCWD canals and similar delivery systems); habitat restoration, enhancement, and management actions (conservation measures); and adaptive management and monitoring activities. This would include the issuance of permits to facilitate covered activities and the implementation of a conservation strategy, including guidance for the acquisition of land for conservation purposes and the adoption of standard practices for habitat restoration, species protection, ecosystem preservation, and other conservation activities. Most covered activities would require individual permits and approvals pursuant to the Local Agencies' general plans and land use regulations or the requirements of the implementing agency (such as Caltrans and irrigation districts) and would undergo subsequent project-level CEQA review and relevant NEPA review for construction and operation-related impacts; some covered activities, however, may be exempted from environmental review requirements due to project characteristics including small projects or infill projects.

Impact LU-1: Physically divide an established community (NEPA: less than significant; CEQA: less than significant)

Under Alternative 2, adoption and implementation of the BRCP would occur. Nevertheless, land use designations, as well as approval and standards for development of land uses and infrastructure, would continue to be ultimately governed by the land use components of the general and specific plans of the Local Agencies. Therefore, in regard to the physical division of established communities, the determined land use impacts of the Local Agencies' general plans are incorporated by reference. The environmental review performed for all of these plans found no significant land use impacts relating to the physical division of existing communities. Although this EIS/EIR covers a longer planning horizon than the local general plans, it is anticipated that the nature of longer-term future development activity would not change and would, therefore, not divide established communities.

The proposed BRCP itself would serve to regulate and direct the policies and activities described above, and would affect the manner in which particular areas are developed pursuant to their designated land uses. However, the BRCP itself would generally not result directly in the construction or demolition of significant structures. Because implementation of the Local Agencies' general plans would not cause significant land use impacts relating to the physical division of existing communities, and the BRCP would not result in construction or demolition activities not anticipated by these plans, Alternative 2 would not physically divide established communities through construction or demolition activities.

Although the BRCP does not identify the specific locations of lands that will be acquired for conservation purposes, it is anticipated that they will be located primarily on undeveloped or agricultural lands where there are existing special status species habitats or populations, or with high connectivity to existing habitat and conservation areas. Such areas would typically be non-urbanized and outside of established communities and, therefore, it is not expected that the BRCP would affect the cohesiveness of established communities.

For existing communities that include intervening areas of open space, any access restrictions on those lands could create physical barriers; however, the BRCP incorporates provisions that indicate that these sort of access restrictions are not appropriate in areas with existing development. Specifically, AMM 7, Design Developments to Minimize Indirect Impacts at Urban-Habitat Interfaces, states the following (*italics are used to emphasize the key language*).

Where residential, commercial, public, and industrial facility and agricultural services facility projects are implemented adjacent to natural communities, urban-habitat interface elements will be incorporated into project design to minimize the indirect impacts of the development on adjacent habitat areas. Indirect impacts on adjacent habitat result from human activities that can result in noise and visual disturbances at urban-habitat interfaces that diminish the ability of covered and other native wildlife to use the habitat, increased numbers of pets (e.g., dogs, cats) in habitats that can result in harassment and mortality of covered and other native wildlife species, increased levels of direct habitat disturbances associated with increased human access to habitats (e.g., destruction of vegetation and injury or mortality of wildlife associated with use of off-road vehicles in habitat), and planting of invasive, nonnative plants. Where agricultural lands are protected under the BRCP that support habitat for covered species that are not tolerant of human disturbances, urban-habitat interface elements will also be incorporated into project design to minimize the impacts of development on these agricultural habitat lands. *This AMM does not apply to residential, commercial, public, and industrial facility developments constructed adjacent to existing developed and agricultural lands because these lands either do not support covered species habitat and/or are currently subject to high levels of existing human-related disturbances.*

This indicates that although access restrictions may be applied to other conservation lands, their use would be precluded in areas adjacent to existing communities and development. Therefore, even in those limited instances where physical division of existing communities might have occurred, the BRCP would forgo the implementation of conservation strategies that would create such divisions. By focusing conservation efforts in non-urbanized areas, the BRCP would avoid the creation of physical divisions within established communities.

NEPA Determination: Alternative 2 would not result in construction or demolition activities not anticipated by the Local Agencies' general plans and would focus conservation efforts related to the conservation strategy in non-urbanized areas. The impact would be less than significant. No mitigation is required.

CEQA Determination: Alternative 2 would not result in construction or demolition activities not anticipated by the Local Agencies' general plans and would focus conservation efforts related to the conservation strategy in non-urbanized areas. The impact would be less than significant. No mitigation is required.

Impact LU-2: Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to, a general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect (NEPA: less than significant; CEQA: less than significant)

As discussed above, under Alternative 2, land use and development would continue to be ultimately governed by the land use components of the Local Agencies' general and specific plans. The BRCP would serve to guide future land use decisions with regard to both potential land use changes and the manner in which particular areas are developed pursuant to their designated land uses. Therefore, in regard to conflicts with land use plans, policies, and regulations, the determined land use impacts of the Local Agencies' general plans are incorporated by reference. The environmental review performed for all of these plans found no significant land use impacts relating to conflicts with land use plans, policies, and regulations. Although this EIS/EIR covers a longer planning horizon than the local general plans, it is anticipated that the nature of longer-term future relationships to land use plans would not change. In addition, while the Local Agencies will likely amend their general plans during the planning horizon of the BRCP, it is speculative to consider the likely contents of those plans to determine potential conflicts.

As noted above, the BRCP outlines a conservation strategy that includes the acquisition and management of land for conservation purposes, and identifies target areas for acquisition of conservation lands, but does not identify specific parcels for such uses. Therefore, it is possible that implementation of the BRCP will lead to the acquisition and/or use of land for conservation purposes at locations that are designated for development by a County or city general plan. However, the BRCP does not designate specific lands for conservation, and it does not have the land use authority to do so. Therefore, the BRCP does not reduce or affect the ability of the County or cities to regulate land use through their general plans. Any decisions regarding the use of lands for conservation purposes would be made by individual willing landowners, just as they would without the BRCP in place and within the context of the local general plans. Furthermore, on a larger scale, the BRCP would actually be supportive of applicable land use plans, policies, and regulations by allowing their implementation to more efficiently and effectively comply with conservation directives at the local, state, and federal levels. Finally, by adopting the BRCP, it is anticipated fragmentation of habitat and conservation and agricultural designated areas could be reduced, as

compared to Alternative 1. This could result in compatible land uses being adjacent to each other, such as agriculture adjacent to conservation areas and urban areas adjacent to other urban areas. Alternative 2 would thereby help to avoid and mitigate environmental effects.

NEPA Determination: Alternative 2, particularly the conservation strategy, would not reduce or affect the ability of the Local Agencies to regulate land use through the general plans. The impact would be less than significant. No mitigation is required.

CEQA Determination: Alternative 2, particularly the conservation strategy, would not reduce or affect the ability of the Local Agencies to regulate land use through the general plans. The impact would be less than significant. No mitigation is required.

Impact LU-3: Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan (NEPA: less than significant; CEQA: less than significant)

Currently, no HCPs or NCCPs exist within the Plan Area, and the BRCP would itself establish and serve as the HCP and NCCP for the portions of the county that it covers. The only conservation plan that overlaps with the Plan Area is that for the Sacramento River, namely, the Anadromous Fish Restoration Program. This conservation plan will continue to govern in the areas where it is applicable (i.e., the Sacramento River). For those areas that overlap with the Plan Area, the Anadromous Fish Restoration Program would supersede the BRCP, which is not itself intended to address activities that could affect fish in the river. Although the BRCP would defer to the existing regional conservation plan for the Sacramento River, it would serve as the principal regional conservation planning document for all other portions of the Plan Area. In addition, there is a new HCP (possibly NCCP) effort underway for DWR and the Central Valley Flood Improvement Act on the Feather River. It will likely be primarily instream, between levee work, similar to that of the Anadromous Fish Restoration Program. However, this Feather River plan is not completed, thus no conflict exists between the plan and the BRCP.

In regard to neighboring HCPs and NCCPs, a planning effort for the Yuba Sutter Regional Conservation Plan (YSRCP), which serves as an HCP and NCCP, is currently underway. The YSRCP is still in the early stages of development, so there is no draft plan available to review. Nevertheless, the BRCP strives for compatibility with existing and future neighboring HCPs and NCCPs. The conservation strategy detailed in Chapter 5 of the BRCP includes directives for the BRCP to both consider its relationship to existing conservation areas and to coordinate its land acquisition activities with those of neighboring conservation plans, as well as with the goals of statewide conservation programs. Moreover, by working closely with state and federal regulatory agencies (e.g., the CDFW and the USFWS) to craft conservation approaches, secure approvals, and acquire appropriate conservation lands, the BRCP would further ensure its compatibility with other conservation plans.

NEPA Determination: As a result of Alternative 2's deference to the Anadromous Fish Restoration Program and directives to coordinate land acquisition activities with neighboring and statewide conservation plans, the impact would be less than significant. No mitigation is required.

CEQA Determination: As a result of Alternative 2's deference to the Anadromous Fish Restoration Program and directives to coordinate land acquisition activities with neighboring and statewide conservation plans, the impact would be less than significant. No mitigation measure is required.

Alternative 3—Reduced Development/Reduced Fill

Alternative 3 is similar to Alternative 2 except that it uses the various general plan EIR reduced development alternatives as described in Chapter 2, *Proposed Action and Alternatives*, to create a single reduced development footprint. Covered activities under this alternative would be similar to those described in the BRCP but would be limited to the reduced development footprint for a reduced permit term of 30 years. The reduced footprint and reduced land conservation would result in fewer built structures and less ground disturbance. The covered activities would be restricted to activities and geographic extents consistent with the land uses and development footprints of the reduced development alternatives of the general plans for the Local Agencies. This alternative assumes that the Local Agencies would all amend their general plans or otherwise adopt an alternative growth pattern consistent with the reduced or more compact development alternatives outlined in their respective general plan EIRs.

It is anticipated that under Alternative 3, fewer acres of natural communities would be conserved because reduced development would provide reduced funding for the conservation strategy. However, it is anticipated that the conservation measures would be the same because the reduction of fill would be achieved through the reduced development footprint of the Local Agencies' general plans rather than through modification of the conservation measures. Consequently, the impacts related to implementation of the conservation strategy and conservation measures would be the same as under Alternative 2.

Impact LU-1: Physically divide an established community (NEPA: less than significant; CEQA: less than significant)

Alternative 3 would still result in the adoption and implementation of key BRCP components; therefore, the potential impacts of this alternative related to the division of established communities would be substantially similar to those discussed above for Alternative 2. The only pertinent difference is that the extent of covered activities would be reduced and, because of the reduced footprint of development, the extent of lands acquired or used for conservation purposes would be reduced. However, the nature of potential impacts would be the same as Alternative 2.

Environmental review of the reduced and/or concentrated development alternatives for the Local Agencies' general plans is incorporated by reference. The general plans determined that these alternatives would have substantially similar land use impacts as the adopted general plans, which themselves had less-than-significant land use impacts under this criterion. Although this EIS/EIR covers a longer planning horizon than the local general plans, it is anticipated that the nature of longer-term future development activity would not change and would, therefore, not divide established communities.

Reduced development, more restricted development footprints, and/or the greater concentration of development within current urbanized areas would not serve to create or exacerbate physical divisions within existing communities. Like Alternative 2, Alternative 3 would place the highest priority on the conservation of undeveloped and agricultural lands. Although a decreased development area might provide additional opportunities or land area for conservation, which could potentially occur within established communities, the same approach to prioritizing land acquisition outside of developed areas would nonetheless apply. By focusing conservation efforts in non-urbanized areas, Alternative 3 would avoid the creation of physical divisions within established communities.

NEPA Determination: Implementation of the Local Agencies' reduced development alternatives under Alternative 3 and focusing the conservation efforts in non-urbanized areas would result in impacts that are less than significant. No mitigation is required.

CEQA Determination: Implementation of the Local Agencies' reduced development alternatives under Alternative 3 and focusing the conservation efforts in non-urbanized areas would result in impacts that are less than significant. No mitigation is required.

Impact LU-2: Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to, a general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect (NEPA: less than significant; CEQA: less than significant)

As with implementation of Alternative 2, land uses and development under Alternative 3 would continue to be ultimately governed by land use components of the general and specific plans of the Local Agencies. The core components of the BRCP adopted under Alternative 3 would still help guide future land use decisions and certain aspects of site design. Therefore, in regard to the conflicts with land use plans, policies, and regulations, the determined land use impacts of the Local Agencies' general plans are incorporated by reference. The environmental review performed for all of these plans found no significant land use impacts relating to conflicts with land use plans, policies, and regulations. Although this EIS/EIR covers a longer planning horizon than the local general plans, it is anticipated that the nature of longer-term future relationships to land use plans would not change. In addition, while the Local Agencies will likely amend their general plans during the planning horizon of the BRCP, it is speculative to consider the likely contents of those plans to determine potential conflicts.

As discussed for Alternative 2, it is possible that implementation of the BRCP would lead to the acquisition and/or use of land for conservation purposes at locations that are designated for development by a County or city general plan. However, the BRCP does not designate specific lands for conservation, and it does not have the land use authority to do so, so the BRCP does not reduce or affect the ability of the Local Agencies to regulate land use through their general plans. Any decisions regarding the use of lands for conservation purposes would be made by individual willing landowners. In addition, the BRCP would actually support applicable land use plans, policies, and regulations by allowing their implementation to more efficiently and effectively comply with conservation directives at the local, state, and federal levels.

Finally, although Alternative 3 includes development footprints that are smaller than called for in the Local Agencies' general plans, this alternative would include amendments to the Local Agencies' general plans to reflect the reduced development alternatives. Therefore, the covered activities under Alternative 3 would be consistent with the Local Agencies' general plans.

NEPA Determination: Alternative 3 would not reduce or affect the ability of the Local Agencies to regulate land use through the general plans. The impact would be less than significant. No mitigation is required.

CEQA Determination: Alternative 3 would not reduce or affect the ability of the Local Agencies to regulate land use through the general plans. The impact would be less than significant. No mitigation is required.

Impact LU-3: Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan (NEPA: less than significant; CEQA: less than significant)

Alternative 3 would still result in the adoption and implementation of key BRCP components; therefore, the potential impacts of this alternative under this criterion would be substantially similar to those discussed above for Alternative 2, and the entirety of the impact discussion for Alternative 2 under this criterion is likewise applicable to Alternative 3. Although Alternative 3 would result in a smaller development footprint and would result in the amendment of Local Agency general plans, this would not change the analysis or findings related to conflicts with other HCPs and NCCPs, and all other BRCP components (including those relating to deference to the Anadromous Fish Restoration Plan and ensuring compatibility with other conservation plans) would be unchanged from Alternative 2.

NEPA Determination: As a result of Alternative 3's deference to the Anadromous Fish Restoration Program and directives to coordinate land acquisition activities with neighboring and statewide conservation plans, the impact would be less than significant. No mitigation is required.

CEQA Determination: As a result of Alternative 3's deference to the Anadromous Fish Restoration Program and directives to coordinate land acquisition activities with neighboring and statewide conservation plans, the impact would be less than significant. No mitigation is required.

Alternative 4—Greater Conservation

Alternative 4 would be similar to Alternative 2 except that under Alternative 4, the conservation strategy would include the conservation of an additional 9,850 acres of grassland and 35,310 acres of riceland. Alternative 4 would include the same conservation measures as Alternative 2, and all other acreage protection targets for natural communities/land types would be the same as described under Alternative 2. Therefore, impact mechanisms for land use and consistency would be similar to those described for Alternative 2.

Impact LU-1: Physically divide an established community (NEPA: less than significant; CEQA: less than significant)

Alternative 4 would still result in the adoption and implementation of key BRCP components; therefore, the potential impacts of this alternative related to the division of established communities would be substantially similar to those discussed above for Alternative 2. The entirety of the impact discussion for Alternative 2 under this criterion is likewise applicable to Alternative 4. Like Alternative 2, Alternative 4 would place the highest priority on the conservation of undeveloped and agricultural lands. Although Alternative 4 would seek to acquire an expanded area of conservation lands, the expanded areas would be on land farmed for rice or lands currently in open space, which do not exist within established communities. By focusing conservation efforts in non-urbanized areas, Alternative 4 would avoid the creation of physical divisions within established communities.

NEPA Determination: Alternative 4 would not result in construction or demolition activities not anticipated by the general plans and would focus conservation efforts in non-urbanized areas. The impact would be less than significant. No mitigation is required.

CEQA Determination: Alternative 4 would not result in construction or demolition activities not anticipated by the general plans and would focus conservation efforts in non-urbanized areas. The impact would be less than significant. No mitigation is required.

Impact LU-2: Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to, a general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect (NEPA: less than significant; CEQA: less than significant)

Since Alternative 4 would still result in the adoption and implementation of key BRCP components, the potential impacts of this alternative related to conflicts with land use plans, policies, or regulations would be substantially similar to those discussed above for Alternative 2. The entirety of the impact discussion for Alternative 2 under this criterion is likewise applicable to Alternative 4. As with Alternative 2, land uses and development under Alternative 4 would continue to be ultimately governed by land use components of the general and specific plans of the Local Agencies, which were not found to have significant impacts regarding conflicts with land use plans, policies, and regulations in their respective environmental reviews. In addition, conservation acquisitions and uses under this alternative would not reduce or affect the ability of the Local Agencies to regulate land use through their general plans because any decisions regarding the use of lands for conservation purposes would be made by individual willing landowners. Furthermore, Alternative 4 would support land use plans, policies, and regulations through regional coordination and coordination with state and federal agencies.

NEPA Determination: Alternative 4 would not reduce or affect the ability of the Local Agencies to regulate land use through the general plans. The impact would be less than significant. No mitigation is required.

CEQA Determination: Alternative 4 would not reduce or affect the ability of the Local Agencies to regulate land use through the general plans. The impact would be less than significant. No mitigation is required.

Impact LU-3: Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan (NEPA: less than significant; CEQA: less than significant)

Alternative 4 would still result in the adoption and implementation of key BRCP components; therefore, the potential impacts of this alternative under this criterion would be substantially similar to those discussed above for Alternative 2, and the entirety of the impact discussion for Alternative 2 under this criterion is likewise applicable to Alternative 4. Although Alternative 4 would seek to acquire or otherwise protect larger areas of particular species habitat, natural communities, or landcover types, this would not change the analysis or findings related to conflicts with other HCPs and NCCPs, and all other BRCP components (including those relating to deference to the Anadromous Fish Restoration Plan and ensuring compatibility with other conservation plans) would be unchanged from Alternative 2.

NEPA Determination: As a result of the Alternative 4's deference to the Anadromous Fish Restoration Program and directives to coordinate land acquisition activities with neighboring and statewide conservation plans, the impact would be less than significant. No mitigation is required.

CEQA Determination: As a result of the Alternative 4's deference to the Anadromous Fish Restoration Program and directives to coordinate land acquisition activities with neighboring and statewide conservation plans, the impact would be less than significant. No mitigation is required.

10.2.4 Cumulative Analysis

Methods and Approach

The cumulative analysis for land use and consistency is a qualitative evaluation using the past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects listed in Chapter 3, Section 3.3.2, under *Cumulative Impacts*. This analysis considered urban development projects, including roadway projects, and water supply development projects; the general plan EIR impact determinations for cumulative impacts, where applicable; and the impact determinations identified above for the various alternatives. This analysis determines whether the covered activities not analyzed in previous environmental documents would result in a cumulatively considerable incremental contribution that, when combined with the past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects, would have a cumulatively significant impact.

Given the nature of the BRCP and its action alternatives, the potential for cumulative land use impacts under the three significance criteria outlined and discussed above is limited. Most land use impacts occur at the level of a neighborhood, a community, a city, or some other sub-regional area. Because the BRCP would serve as a regional conservation planning document, the preceding analysis necessarily considered land use impacts at a regional scale and thereby addressed most impacts that could be cumulatively considerable in a geographic sense.

Similarly, although the BRCP and action alternatives would be implemented over a lengthy time period, land use impacts are primarily geographic in nature and would not generally be expected to accumulate over time. However, as explained in Chapter 3, this cumulative impact analysis does consider reasonably foreseeable projects in the Plan Area that are not considered part of the proposed action or alternative actions, including flood control facilities, water control facilities, emergency activities, agricultural land conversion, water transfers, operation of hydroelectric facilities, and the preparation of the YSRCP.

Cumulative Impacts

Alternative 1—No Action (No Plan Implementation)

Under Alternative 1, the BRCP would not be adopted and development would occur as currently planned for and allowed under existing and in-process Local Agency general and specific plans. Therefore, the determined cumulative land use impacts of the general plans for the Local Agencies are incorporated by reference. The environmental review performed for all of these plans found no significant cumulative land use impacts. Alternative 1 would not change development activity allowed by these general plans. In addition, since adoption and implementation of the BRCP would not occur, applicable conservation areas, practices, and policies would continue to be dictated by any existing or future HCPs or NCCPs in the area, as well as by other plans, policies, and regulations pertaining to species protection and habitat conservation, thus avoiding potential conflicts with such plans. However, the lack of the BRCP could exacerbate fragmentation of habitat and conservation and agricultural designated areas which could result in incompatible land uses, such as agriculture adjacent to urban or urban adjacent to conservation areas. But, because Alternative 1 would have no land use impacts, it would not contribute to a cumulatively significant land use impact.

Alternative 2—Proposed Action

Under Alternative 2, the BRCP would be adopted and implemented as described in Chapter 2, *Proposed Action and Alternatives*, and in the BRCP itself. The preceding analysis in Section 10.2.3, *Impacts and Mitigation Measures*, found that the land use impacts of Alternative 2 would be less than significant. Covered activities would be consistent with the County and city general plans, which were found to have no significant land use impacts in their respective EIRs. Meanwhile, the conservation strategy would: focus on non-urbanized areas; avoid established communities; not reduce or affect the ability of the County or cities to regulate land use through their general plans; support land use plans, policies, and regulations through regional coordination and coordination with state and federal agencies; and ensure consistency with the YSRCP. Other reasonably foreseeable projects would be subject to relevant land use plans, policies, and regulations, including the Local Agencies' general plans, which would ensure consistency with relevant planning documents. In addition, the nature of the types of reasonably foreseeable projects would not inherently divide established communities. Therefore, when considered in combination with other reasonably foreseeable projects, the impacts of Alternative 2 are deemed to be less than cumulatively considerable.

Alternative 3—Reduced Development/Reduced Fill

Under Alternative 3, all key components of the BRCP would be adopted and implemented as described above, in Chapter 2, *Proposed Action and Alternatives*, and in the BRCP itself; however, the permit term for the BCRP would be reduced from 50 years to 30 years, and the covered activities would be restricted to activities and geographic extents consistent with the land uses and development footprints of the reduced development alternatives of the general plans for the Local Agencies. As discussed in Section 10.2.3, *Impacts and Mitigation Measures*, Alternative 3 would have less-than-significant land use impacts that are substantially similar to those under Alternative 2. Therefore, the cumulative impacts analysis for Alternative 2 likewise applies to Alternative 3, the impacts of which would thus be less than cumulatively considerable.

Alternative 4—Greater Conservation

Under Alternative 4, all key components of the BRCP would be adopted and implemented as described above, in Chapter 2, and in the BRCP itself; however, in this alternative, the BRCP would include directives to acquire additional lands or take other actions to establish larger conservation areas for particular species habitats, natural communities, or landcover types. As discussed in Section 10.2.3, *Impacts and Mitigation Measures*, Alternative 4 would have less-than-significant land use impacts that are substantially similar to those under Alternative 2. Therefore, the cumulative impacts analysis for Alternative 2 likewise applies to Alternative 4, the impacts of which would thus be less than cumulatively considerable.

10.3 References

Cook, David. Planning and Environmental Specialist. Bureau of Land Management, Redding Field Office, CA. September 24, 2009—personal communication with Lisa Katz, The Planning Center | DC&E.

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